

## How can I prevent it?

Produce less moisture—

- Cover pans
- Dry clothes outdoors
- Vent your tumble dryer to the outside
- Avoid using paraffin or flue-less bottled gas heater

Ventilate to remove moisture—

- Ventilate all the time, especially when someone is in. Keep trickle vents in windows open and if these are not provided, use the ventilating catch as these are secure
- Increase ventilation of the kitchen and bathroom when in use and shut the door
- Ventilate cupboards, wardrobes and blocked chimneys
- Make sure you use any mechanical extraction fitted

Heat your home a little more—

- If possible, keep low background heat on all day, with background ventilation
- Find out about help with fuel bills and benefits

## What about my landlord?

Your landlord may be able to undertake certain works to reduce the damp and mould problem:

- Insulating the loft
- Draught-proofing the windows
- Draught-proofing the external doors
- Damp Proof Course
- Consider cavity insulation
- Consider secondary glazing
- Install adequate ventilation— extractor fans, trickle vents etc.
- Other works such as cleaning the mould with an anti-fungicidal wash

If you are a tenant without extractor fans or adequate heating, our Housing and Communities Team may be able to liaise with your landlord to see if such measures can be provided.

Responders to Warmth may be able to help with advice, small grants and referrals to FREE heating installations. (Subject to eligibility)

# Damp and Mould Guide

## How is damp and mould caused?

Damp and mould is a common problem in homes, and older properties tend to suffer more than new ones.

The problem is often a matter of degree: from a small patch of mould or discoloured wallpaper behind the wardrobe, in the very top corner of a bedroom, to serious amounts of mould growth across walls, inside wardrobes and on clothes, furnishings, carpets and in basements.

It is a serious problem because of the health risks associated with mould spores. The mould fungi have been identified as the source of many health problems, including infections, asthma, allergies and sinusitis.

Moulds produce allergens, irritants and in some cases, toxins that may cause reactions in humans. However there are easy ways to reduce the problems and prevent condensation occurring, which in the vast majority of cases is the cause of visible black mould in a property.

The main causes of damp and mould include:

- Water leaks from windows, roof, downspouts, guttering, internal plumbing and flooding
- Penetrating damp through walls
- Rising damp—usually caused by non-existent or defective damp proof courses. This will appear as a water mark up to 1 meter high on a wall rather than black mould
- Wet or damp basements or crawl spaces
- Condensation from relative humidity in air, presenting as black mould and running water on walls
- Too much water vapour or steam being generated through cooking, washing, bathing, showering and clothes drying which is allowed to travel throughout the house
- Inadequate ventilation
- Inadequate heating
- Inadequate cleaning and drying after major water leaks and bursts or floods

If following the advice in this booklet does not help with your damp and mould problem or your landlord is not willing to undertake works to resolve the issue, you can report this issue to the Council on our online form under the Self Service section.

### Contact Us

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